

Remarks/Arguments

In the first Office Action herein, dated February 7, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, inclusive, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over different asserted combinations of three prior art patents, and indicated the allowability of claim 4. The three cited and applied prior art references included U.S. Patents Nos. 3,225,501 to McCaron, 5,271,203 to Nagel, and 6,663,322 B1 to Listle. The principal reference employed by the Examiner was Nagel.

Applicant has carefully reviewed the Examiner's Action, the cited and applied prior art references, and the specification, claims, abstract and drawings in the present application, and by this Amendment, proposes certain changes in this case which are believed now to place this application in a full condition for allowance of the three claims which will be present in the case as a consequence of entry of this Amendment.

Without agreeing with the Examiner's substantive rejections of claims 103, inclusive, applicant, by the present Amendment, cancels claims 1 and 4 without prejudice, currently amends claims 2 and 3, and introduces new claim 5 which, essentially, is an independent-claim form of originally presented claim 4 which the Examiner indicated to be an allowable claim if written in independent-claim form.

Currently amended claims 2 and 3 now depend from allowable claim 5, and should be allowable along with claim 5.

Entry of this Amendment, therefore, clears issues presented in this case on the basis of the Examiner's Action, and puts amended claims 2 and 3, and newly presented claim 5, clearly in conditions for immediate allowance.

Accordingly, favorable reconsideration of this application, and early allowance of claims 2, 3 and 5, are respectfully solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the amendment or remarks, the Examiner is invited to contact Attorney-of-Record Jon M. Dickinson, Esq., at 503-504-2271.

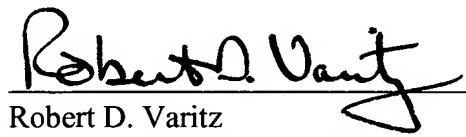
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Respectfully Submitted,

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ROBERT D. VARITZ, P.C.

Registration No: 31436
Telephone: 503-720-1983
Facsimile: 503-233-7730

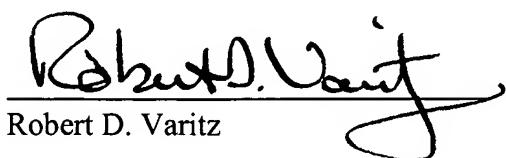

Robert D. Varitz
2007 S.E. GRANT STREET
Portland, Oregon 97214

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I hereby certify that the attached Response to Office Action under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to:

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Washington, D.C. 22313-1450


Robert D. Varitz